

## DOES YOUR CHILD KNOW WHERE YOUR GUN IS?

A recent survey found that nearly half of all Utah homes have one or more firearms. Whatever your feelings about guns, it's a sad fact that innocent children are killed every year when they find weapons that aren't stored safely. Chances are there is a loaded, unlocked gun in one of your neighbor's homes. Is there one in yours?

If you keep firearms, leave them unloaded and store the ammunition in a separate place, or keep them locked in a safe. But keep in mind that a child as young as three or four can use a key to open a safe. In fact, that very thing happened earlier this year in Utah and the result was tragic: a four-year-old boy unlocked the gun safe in his home and shot his three-year-old brother in the face with a handgun.

Other Utah children have been killed while playing with guns at friends' homes. As a parent, your odds of preventing a similar tragedy are much better if you find out where those guns are. And there's a very easy way to do it: just ASK.

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## KEEP IT SAFE THIS SEASON

The holidays are coming up fast. It's an exciting time – but it also presents some dangers that don't occur other times of the year. Here are a few ways you can celebrate safely:

### Thanksgiving

- Keep hot food and liquids away from the edges of counters and tables, where they can be easily knocked over by a curious young child.
- Keep all cooking pot/pan handles turned toward the back of the stove.
- Remember the homes you visit may not be childproofed. Keep an eye out for danger spots.



### Christmas

- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.

- Avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.
- Follow recommended age ranges on toy packages. Toys that are too advanced could be a safety hazard for younger children.
- Be careful of holiday gift-wrapping, like bags, paper, ribbons and bows. These items are choking hazards for children.



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# WILDERNESS AND COLD WEATHER SURVIVAL

Anyone who ventures outdoors for camping, hiking, or other activities knows there is always the risk of getting hurt or lost. Once that happens, your survival will depend on how well you are prepared and how well you handle stress. Being prepared is probably the most important element in determining how you will manage until you find your way out or are rescued.

Before going out, get a current weather forecast for your destination and dress accordingly. But remember that the weather can change without warning, and being prepared for this can mean the difference between life and death. Your outermost layer of dress should be waterproof for protection from the elements. Dress with layers of light, natural fibers and don't forget to wear a hat. You can lose a lot of body heat from an exposed head. Tie an extra coat around your waist even if you don't think you're going to need it. It is better to have too much clothing with you than not enough.

Always tell a responsible adult where you are going and how long you plan to be gone. If you don't, rescuers won't know where to look for you.

As we all learned when we were younger, the buddy system is still a good idea. It's better to have someone with you who can help if you are injured or can go for help if necessary. Take a cell phone, but remember that you may not have reception when you need it most.

Be prepared when you leave. A fanny pack can hold a few basic items – something to start a fire (waterproof matches or a lighter), first-aid items, a



pocketknife, compass (learn how to use it before you go), a whistle, cell phone, and snacks. To be really prepared for the unexpected, take a backpack containing a flashlight with extra batteries, extra clothing (including rain gear), a tent or a tarp for shelter, emergency food, and extra water.

If you become lost, the best advice is to **stop** where you are and **stay put**. The rescuers will have a better chance of locating you if you stay in one place.

Whether you're in the mountains or just playing down the street in the winter, you should be concerned about exposure to cold temperatures that can result in hypothermia (cooling of the entire body), and localized cold injuries (frostnip and frostbite). Dress warmly, in layers, take all measures to remain safe and have FUN!



## DOES YOUR CHILD KNOW WHERE YOUR GUN IS? *Continued from page 1*

ASK stands for “Asking Saves Kids.” It’s a nationwide safety campaign that offers a remarkably simple way to find out whether your neighbors have guns in their homes. Include the question along with other things you might normally discuss before sending your child to someone’s house – such as seat belts, animals, or allergies. And if you have any doubts about the safety of someone’s home, politely invite their children to play at your house instead. For more information on the ASK Campaign, visit [www.askingsaveskids.com](http://www.askingsaveskids.com).

**ASK.**  
Asking Saves Kids

It’s also important that you teach your children at a very early age what to do when they see a gun. This message is simple, too: **STOP! DON’T TOUCH! LEAVE THE AREA AND TELL AN ADULT!** Make sure they understand the message is the same anytime they see a gun.

Finally, remember that it’s nearly impossible to “hide” a gun from a child. Who doesn’t remember finding all the places their parents hid the Christmas gifts? If you could do it, your kids can, too.

## CHILD SAFETY SEATS STILL USABLE AFTER MINOR CRASHES

It was once thought that parents should throw away any child safety seat involved in a crash. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) believed that any impact could damage the seat and make it less safe.

Today, though, NHTSA says the seats are often reusable. Agency officials are worried that some parents might not have the money to buy a new seat after a crash, and that they might let their child go without a seat while they look for a new one.

NHTSA still recommends getting new seats after any moderate or severe crash, but says parents can keep seats if all the following items are true:

- The vehicle was able to be driven away from the crash site;
- The vehicle door closest to the safety seat was undamaged;
- There were no injuries to anyone inside the vehicle;
- The air bags (if the vehicle has them) did not inflate; AND
- There is no visible damage to the safety seat.

If your seat has been involved in a crash, even a minor one, it’s a good idea to check with the company that made the seat to be sure it is okay to keep.

**And remember, no child restraint will work unless the child is buckled into it – on every ride.**

## SKI SMART FROM THE START

Every year, more than 40,000 children ages 5-14 are treated in hospital emergency rooms for skiing and snowboarding-related injuries. The risk for head injury among children in this age group is especially high. When skiers and snowboarders wear helmets, they reduce the risk of head injuries by about half. So make it a rule: Insist that children put on a ski helmet every time they hit the slopes. When choosing a ski helmet, pay attention to the following:

- Choose a certified helmet made specifically for snow sports. Look for ASTM F2040, Snell RS-98 or CEN 1077 standards.
- The pads should be flush against the cheeks and forehead.
- The helmet should be snug with the chinstrap fastened.
- The helmet should rest above the eyebrows and not roll forward or backward.

Other ski and snowboard tips include:

- Make sure your ski goggles fit well. If they don’t, steam can build up inside and make it hard to see where you’re going.
- Make sure your boots and bindings are adjusted to fit right. Poorly-fitting equipment can make you much more likely to fall.
- Children should never ski or snowboard alone. Consider sending them with a cell phone to call for help if they become lost.
- Watch out for other skiers, especially where trails meet. Ski in-bounds and away from trees.
- Enroll your children in a ski or snowboard class.





# CARBON MONOXIDE *The Silent Killer*

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that's often called the "silent killer." It is a poison that kills hundreds of people each year.

Children are at greater risk of carbon monoxide poisoning than adults because the gas builds up in their bodies faster. The most common sources of carbon monoxide are furnaces, water heaters, ovens, stoves, gas dryers, clogged chimneys, unvented heaters and vehicles.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include: headache, nausea, vomiting, and tiredness. Often entire families become sick and pass the symptoms off as the flu, but don't make that mistake: It's nearly impossible for every

member of a family to get sick at the same time. If you think you or your children are victims of carbon monoxide poisoning, get out of the house immediately and call emergency services.

The good news is carbon monoxide poisoning is preventable:

- Install a carbon monoxide detector in every bedroom of your home.
- If the alarm goes off, leave your home as soon as possible and call the fire department or your local utility company.
- Have all of your gas appliances checked yearly for possible leaks.
- Never leave your car running in the garage.
- Never use your oven, or a charcoal or gas barbecue to heat your home.

- Never use a charcoal or gas barbecue for cooking inside your home.
- Never run a generator in an enclosed space.

Take these extra precautions to keep yourself and your family safe!



A proud member of the



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The Utah SAFE KIDS Coalition thanks **Anchor Printing, Zellerbach Paper, the Utah Highway Safety Office, Utah Department of Health, and Primary Children's Medical Center** for their generous contributions which allowed us to produce this newsletter.

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